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SUBJECT: Media Reaction, Old Fashioned Coup d'Etat

Old Fashioned Coup d'Etat

Center-left Rio daily Jornal do Brasil writes on June 30, 2009, "Last weekend, in less than 10 hours, Honduras watched the deposition of its constitutionally-elected president and the assumption of power by a new ruler, all with the blessing of the Armed Forces and political elite. The reaction from the international community came with the same swiftness of the coup d'tat itself. And the world witnessed one of the very rare occasions when all the principal actors-of the most different political nuances-united themselves in one voice, condemning the anti-democratic act and demanding the return of the legitimate leader, Manuel Zelaya.

The coup's mentors were not counting on the firm and fast repudiation from names ranging from Barack Obama and Luiz Incio Lula da Silva to Hugo Chavez (and his disciples from the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, or ALBA), and organizations such as the Organization of American States and the European Union. Without any international support whatsoever and contested by labor unions and other Honduran civil society representatives, the recently implanted government in Tegucigalpa is already indicating [an openness] for dialogue and a return to democratic normalcy. Meanwhile, the call for retreat grows louder in the country's capital, and the military apparatus stationed in the streets only reinforces the feeling of unease that has descended on the nation.

The coup's origins go back to Zelaya's referendum, which aimed to amend the Constitution and allow for a new term-going against the decision of the courts and the military and opposition's wishes. The president's insistence, who scheduled the vote for Sunday, was the trigger for the uprising. What one saw on the eve of the voting was a repeat ...of the worst stories...of Central America in the 60's and 70's...

The military surrounded Zelaya's house at dawn, brought him to an air base and afterwards dispatched him to Costa Rica. Radio and television transmissions were suspended, electricity was cut and public transportation was interrupted. Around noon, the Honduran congress met in a special session called on by the president, Roberto Micheletti, who was named the country's interim president. That night, Zelaya went to Nicaragua (on board a plane lent to him by Hugo Chavez), and participated in a meeting with other Latin American presidents. In spite of uncertainties, the deposed leader remains confident for the future.

In these times of globalization and multilateralism, there is simply no room for what happened in Honduras. The words of the American president define well the international community's sentiment: 'Any existing tensions and disputes must be resolved peacefully through dialogue free from any outside interference.' Or else, as President Lula pointed out, 'soon it will become fashionable.' The fact is that the countries that know the importance of democracy wish to

guarantee the safety of the deposed leader and that of his family, as well as the restoration of constitutional order and Zelaya's return to the presidency. All that is left is to find out how much each side is willing to cede for that to happen."

MARTINEZ